



PUBLIC HEALTH

Connections

Bureau of Community Health Systems

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To submit an item for *Public Health Connections* or to join the email list, please email **Lisa Horn** at lisa.horn@ks.gov



State Formula funding increase proposed



by Lisa Horn, Public Health Nurse Specialist, KDHE, Local Public Health

The State Formula funds are provided to local health departments to provide a variety of public health services and can be used at a health department's discretion. Many departments use their share for salaries, operating costs and for staff development, to name a few.

"The State Formula helps local health departments do their jobs and gives them the resources they need," said Dennis Kriesel, executive director of the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments.

Despite this important mission, the State Formula hasn't been increased since 1992.

See "State Formula" on page 2

Thanks to all who work in public health

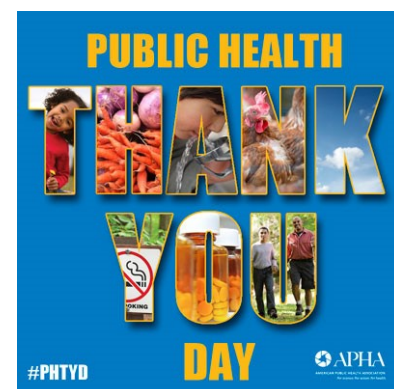
National Public Health Thank You Day was officially celebrated this Monday, **Nov. 25**, but for those in public health around the state, KDHE appreciates the work you do to improve the health of your communities.

When crisis struck May 28, northeast Kansas health departments stepped in to provide tetanus vaccinations to those affected by an EF4 tornado.

Many departments are learning more about trauma-informed care and ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and working to build partnerships between public health and mental health. In partnership with its local mental health center, another county started a postpartum moms support group.

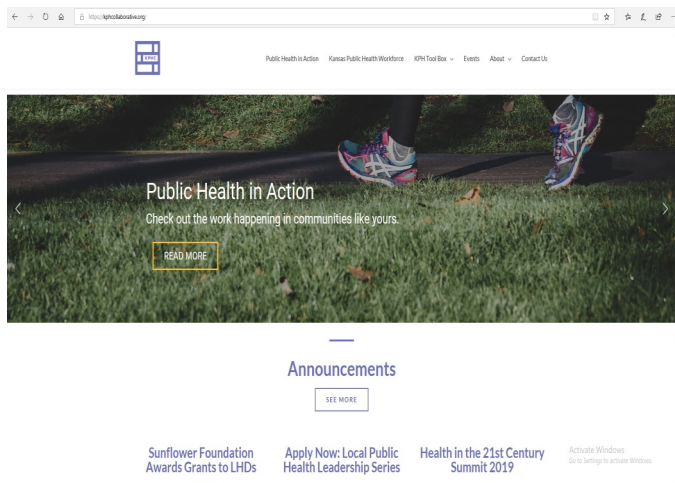
Flooding increased the Reno County Culex mosquito population by the thousands (the highest in the state) in June. To reduce the numbers, the health department partnered with the county's 15 cities on mitigation efforts. The department also partnered with private property owners to place testing devices on their land.

"Your continued creativity in building partnerships is improving the health of your residents," said Ashley Goss, Deputy Secretary for Public Health at KDHE. "For all the challenges you face and the innovative ways you work to address them, know that your work never goes unnoticed — thank you!"





New website is a one stop shop for Kansas public health



New website vital for anyone looking to know more about public health in Kansas

An exciting new website brings all of public health in Kansas together. The Kansas Public Health Collaborative (kphcollaborative.org) seeks to connect the Kansas state and local public health departments, promote the work of public health and support capacity development around the state.

Some of the other helpful resources available are: an interactive statewide map of all health department's programs and services, information on drafting a strategic plan, creating an emergency operations plan and developing an organizational branding strategy.

The Kansas Public Health Collaborative (kphcollaborative.org) is a joint project of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments and Wichita State University's Center for Public Health Initiatives.

To learn more, [watch this video](#).

State Formula funding has remained the same since 1992

Continued from page 1

And yet, "We haven't seen a reduction in the demands of what health departments do," Kriesel added.

After receiving feedback from local health departments, KALHD is planning to request an increase in the State Formula during the 2020 legislative session.

The current amount of the funding is \$2.2 million. The first request to the legislature will be an increase based on inflation, Kriesel said. This increase is approximately \$1.9 million. The average amount each health department will receive depends on if the allocation is awarded alone or if a new minimum threshold is approved.

Under the current funding formula, 68 of the state's 100 health departments receive about \$7,000 a year — the minimum amount listed in the current statute.

If the first request is approved, Kriesel said a second request to increase the funds based on population also would be proposed.

"Even though there are a lot of counties losing population, the state's population as a whole is growing," Kriesel explained.

This increase would add \$600,000 to the original request.

With the legislature set to reconvene in January, Kriesel recommends starting discussions with your legislators (especially those on the budget and social service/health committees in both houses) and to invite legislators to your health departments to learn more. Kriesel has a "Quick Facts" template that each health department can customize to provide to local policymakers. At the start of the year, he also plans to have a template available to aid health departments in preparing written testimonies. [Click here](#) to **download the templates**.

Event brings public health and behavioral health together

by Lisa Horn, Public Health Nurse Specialist, KDHE, Local Public Health

A landmark event to align the work of behavioral health and public health took place Sept. 30 at the Cyrus Hotel in Topeka. Ninety people representing behavioral health, public health, corrections, health care, schools and universities attended the Behavioral Health Community Planning Day.

The event was funded through the Preventive Health Block Grant because of behavioral health's role in community health assessments, improvement plans and accreditation. The grant is facilitated by the Bureau of Health Promotion.



Douglas County Sheriff Ken McGovern speaks during a session at the Behavioral Health Community Planning Day.

“During their community planning processes, nearly half of the local health departments in Kansas prioritized behavioral health,” said Cristi Cain, director of the Local Public Health program at KDHE and one of the event’s organizers. “Unfortunately, there was no roadmap about what to do next.”

KDHE and Wichita State University designed the Behavioral Health Community Planning Day to help communities across the state move forward.

With 30 presenters/topic areas, the event started with an overview of the mental health system and why public health professionals need to engage in this work. The focus then shifted to gap/problem identification for local health departments to increase awareness about problems that potentially exist in their

communities. The afternoon sessions focused on solutions/promising approaches and planning and concluded with a personal story of someone who received behavioral health treatment and is now in recovery.

Numerous respondents expressed gratitude for the event and said they enjoyed the opportunity to learn from other perspectives and connect with people from around the state. Several expressed the desire for similar events in the future and in other regions of the state.

Comments in surveys after the event included:

- “I appreciate the state prioritizing this issue and holding training to help us at the local level address this issue.”
- “It was great to hear how communities/counties across our state are addressing behavioral health challenges.”
- “This was everything and more we hoped (for). I brought so much back to northwest Kansas to help with our efforts to improve mental health.”
- “The BEST conference I have been to in a long time!”
- “Thank you for the opportunity to have the conversation. Valuable, timely, critical and relevant.”
- “Thank you for personalizing our work and our mission through the sharing of the stories.”

Following the event, Aetna awarded nine mini-grants to local health departments to replicate similar events, to address behavioral health with a different strategy and/or to focus on social determinants of health. At least three future events in other regions of Kansas are in the early planning stages. All event participants as well as other local health department administrators will be invited to a community of practice to be scheduled in early 2020 to share successes, challenges and strategies/best practices. Follow-up and ongoing coaching will be provided to communities on request.

“There’s much work to be done and we’re just getting started,” said Amber Dean, research associate at the Community Engagement Institute at Wichita State University and an event organizer. “The connections made and partnerships enhanced Sept. 30 will help us create solutions together to help improve the behavioral health of all our communities.”

KDHE marks National Rural Health Day with ‘Walk With A Doc’

The Kansas State Office of Rural Health celebrated National Rural Health Day on Nov. 21 by hosting “Walk with a Doc” around the state Capitol building. They were joined by Dr. Lauren Poull of GraceMed’s Capitol Family Clinic.

National Rural Health Day recognizes the unique set of challenges people living in rural areas face — longer travel times to hospitals, lack of broadband connections and a shortage of health care providers, to name a few. The State Office of Rural Health and its partners work to address these issues by providing aid to Kansas’s rural and medically underserved communities to build sustainable access to quality, patient-centered primary health care services.



KDHE staff (including Fred the Preparedness Dog) celebrated National Rural Health Day with ‘Walk with a Doc’ around the Capitol.

For more info on the national Walk With a Doc program, [click here](#).

CDC updates interim guidance on vaping-linked lung illness

CDC will no longer monitor non-hospitalized patients due to similarities with hospitalized cases

In an article published in the Nov. 19 early-release issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, interim guidance is provided for health care providers managing patients with suspected electronic cigarette, or vaping, product use-associated lung injury (EVALI). Another report in the same issue suggests that the characteristics of hospitalized and non-hospitalized EVALI patients are similar.

Tara C. Jatlaoui, M.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues summarized recommendations for health care providers managing patients with suspected or known EVALI.

The recommendations include:

- Asking patients with respiratory, gastrointestinal or constitutional symptoms about e-cigarette or vaping product use
- Using pulse oximetry and obtaining chest imaging to evaluate patients suspected of having EVALI
- Considering outpatient management for clinically stable EVALI patients and testing patients for influenza.

In addition, caution should be exercised when prescribing corticosteroids for outpatients as it could worsen respiratory infections; evidence-based strategies should be used to help patients discontinue e-cigarette or vaping product use; and the importance of influenza vaccination should be emphasized with patients — especially those who use e-cigarette or vaping products.

As of Nov. 21, the CDC reported 2,290 confirmed and probable cases and five more deaths from the mysterious respiratory illness tied to vaping, taking the total death toll to 47 so far this year.

Register for Local Public Health Leadership Series

by Jessica Fiscus, Project Manager, WSU Community Engagement Institute

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD) will offer a leadership development opportunity for all public health professionals in the spring of 2020 at the Wichita State University Community Engagement Institute in Wichita.

The purpose of the Local Public Health Leadership Series (LPHLS) is to enhance the ability of all local health department professionals to exercise leadership in the delivery of Medicaid services to residents in their communities.

Leadership involves mobilizing others, sometimes without direct authority to do so, in an effort to address difficult community challenges. These difficult, daunting, adaptive challenges don't have a single expert or manager that can fix them. Progress can be made to address adaptive challenges, but it will require learning, involvement of stakeholders and persistent efforts. Public health professionals are in key positions to provide this kind of leadership.



WICHITA STATE
UNIVERSITY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
INSTITUTE

Center for Public Health Initiatives

LPHLS will develop core knowledge and skills related to identifying and responding to adaptive challenges. The focus will be on the development of leadership competencies identified by the Kansas Leadership Center: Diagnosing the Situation, Managing Self, Energizing Others and Intervening Skillfully. The WSU Community Engagement Institute will serve as faculty and coaches for the series, which is modeled after the Kansas Leadership Center's training curriculum and methods.

The spring 2020 dates are:

- February 11-12
- March 10-11
- April 14-15
- May 5-6.

If interested, click [here](#) to fill out the application. If you have any questions, please contact Kristina Helmer at kristina.helmer@wichita.edu. The deadline to apply is **Jan. 3**.



Learn about the history of epidemics in Kansas

"Epidemic Outbreaks in Kansas," a new course in KS-TRAIN ([#1088265](#)) presents an overview of basic epidemiology, suggests resources and offers recommendations. The course also includes information on the Spanish flu pandemic that originated in Kansas.

Photo Source: Kansas State Historical Society

Mark your calendar for *Legionella* workshop

Learn more about Legionella and create your own water safety and management plan at an upcoming workshop. The South Central Kansas 2020 Health & Medical Pre-Symposium *Legionella* Workshop will be from **8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 24** at the Wichita State University Hughes Metropolitan Complex in Wichita. There is no cost to attend and a box lunch will be provided.

For more information and to register, visit KS-TRAIN ([#1086331](#)).



News & Resources

Save the date for statewide preparedness exercise

The KDHE Preparedness Program's full-scale exercise will take place **April 15-17** and will include several KDHE bureaus, all county health departments, members of health care coalitions, Kansas Department of Emergency Management and many others. Participant registration will open soon.



WHEN: APRIL 15, 16, & 17, 2020
WHERE: STATEWIDE
For more information visit: www.KSPrepared.org

Here's what you can do now to prepare:

- Notify external partners to gain participation.
- Send them a "Save the Date" flyer (click [here](#))
- Block calendars for expected players
- Review your agency's emergency plans and pandemic flu annex.

The KDHE Preparedness Program will disseminate exercise-related information as it is available and send to all stakeholders at the same time. If you receive other information about the exercise, please verify the information by visiting the exercise web page [here](#).

A document detailing exercise components and the proposed plan of play can be found [here](#). Please contact Jennifer Hermon, preparedness exercise coordinator, Jennifer.Hermon@ks.gov, with any questions.

Test technology to distinguish bacterial from viral infections moves forward

A novel technology that reads gene expression patterns in the immune system to distinguish bacterial infections from viral infections and can determine its severity within minutes will receive advanced development support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

The technology is being designed for use in outpatient and inpatient healthcare settings with results expected within 20-30 minutes. Rapid information on whether the infection is viral versus bacterial will help doctors make earlier, better-informed decisions about whether to treat the infection with or without antibiotics.



"Rapid diagnostics are a cornerstone of our strategy to protect Americans from many bacterial and viral infections; earlier diagnosis can empower patients to take action to reduce disease transmission," said Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority Director Rick Bright, Ph.D. "Antimicrobial resistance is a growing threat to public health and the health security of the United States, and diagnostics that can provide rapid results to patients and doctors will support stewardship of antibiotics and save lives."

For more information, click [here](#).

What can the health care sector do to advance health equity?

A study says eliminating racial/ethnic health disparities would reduce health care costs by \$230 billion and indirect costs of excess disease and mortality by more than \$1 trillion over four years.

The full report and summary from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation discuss research on how inequitable social conditions impact the health care system. The report also discusses how inequities in education, employment, housing and structural racism result not only in poorer health outcomes but also in higher health care costs. Click [here](#) for more info on the study.

Study addresses how policies, cultural factors shape low income women's reproductive health care access



In the spring and summer of 2019, the Kaiser Family Foundation, working with Health Management Associates, conducted interviews with clinicians, social service providers, community-based organizations, researchers and health care advocates, as well as a focus group with low-income women in five medically underserved communities.

Based on the interviews and the focus groups, the study identifies themes that cut across all five communities, but play out in different ways depending on the policy, political and social environments in each place.

In addition to an [executive summary report](#), KFF has also published [case study briefs](#) that detail the findings in each of

the five communities. A recording of a briefing, featuring a panel discussion with health leaders from each of the communities, is available [here](#).

[Click here for more info.](#)



Geary County Health Department

Registered Dietitian

https://workforcenow.adp.com/mascsr/default/mdf/recruitment/recruitment.html?cid=787da605-0574-414b-a828-dd44de763072&ccld=19000101_000001&jobId=306433&source=IN

Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department

Nurse-Clinic Manager

<https://ldchealth.org/DocumentCenter/View/2710/Clinic-Manager-Combined>

Public Health Nurse

<https://ldchealth.org/DocumentCenter/View/2704/Public-Health-Nurse-1019>

Shawnee County Health Department

RN – Nurse-Family Partnership

RN – MCH Outreach

Intermittent Nurse Practitioner (APRN) – Family Planning

Registered Dietitian

<https://www.sncosys.org/oasys>



Can't Miss Podcasts

Preparing health departments for climate change

Authors Elena Grossman and Emily York published the article, “Minigrants to Local Health Departments: An Opportunity to Promote Climate Change Preparedness” earlier this year in the Journal of Public Health Management and Practice.

Increasing climate literacy among the public health workforce is key for preparedness, the authors note. As temperatures continue to rise in the United States, state, local and tribal health departments are expected to see increases in heat-related illnesses, water-borne diseases, health issues from mold exposure, injuries and fatalities, mental health consequences of being exposed to extreme weather events, vector-borne diseases and exacerbated respiratory health diseases.

[Click here](#) to listen to the podcast. For more information on **climate change in Kansas**, be sure to **attend a regional public health meeting in the first quarter of 2020**. For dates, [click here](#).

Meeting the public health challenges of longer lives and an aging population

No matter who you are, no matter where you live on the planet and no matter how much you exercise or what you eat, we all share one thing in common about our health: We are all getting older. By the year 2060, there will be nearly 100 million Americans aged 65 and over — about double the amount today. This tremendous growth poses serious challenges and public health researchers are working today to meet those challenges.

In this podcast from the University of Michigan School of Public Health, four researchers examine aging in different ways. They explore what it means in the United States when people live longer and longer and the financial costs of getting older. Diseases that primarily affect the elderly and how a furry friend may benefit us as we age are also discussed.

Click [here](#) to listen.

The office as a vector: How infectious disease spreads in the workplace

With flu and cold season in full swing, will you stay home when sick? Dr. Marie de Perio, a physician and an infectious disease expert with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, discusses her article on how infectious diseases can spread in the workplace.

Click [here](#) to listen.

Raising children to have a healthy relationship with food

This University of Michigan School of Public Health podcast addresses understanding kids' eating behavior from a population health perspective.

Today, nearly one in five school-age children in the United States is affected by obesity and childhood obesity disproportionately affects children living in low-income households. But it's not just about preventing obesity, it's about helping kids establish lifelong healthy relationships with food and with their bodies.

Click [here](#) to listen.